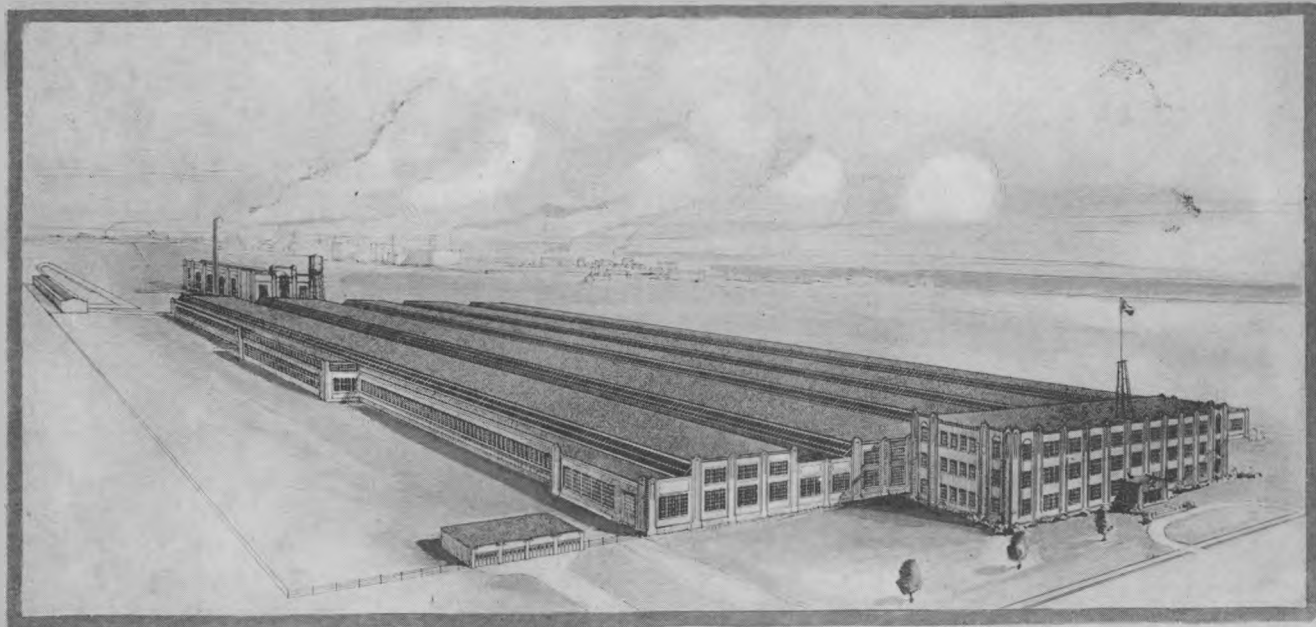


McLaughlin Public Library

Oshawa, Ontario

Gift of

COL. R.S. McLAUGHLIN



 **NEW REGINA PLANT**
From Architect's Drawing

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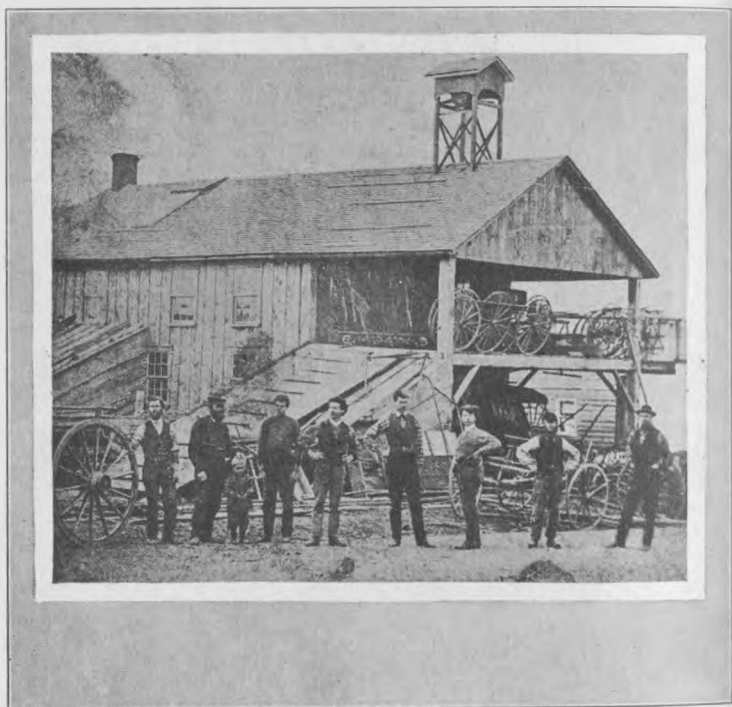
SIXTY YEARS OF PROGRESS

BEING THE
RECORD OF A
NEW FORCE
IN THE LIFE
of
THE PRAIRIES

*Prepared and done into a book,
in commemoration of the
opening of the Regina plant of*

**GENERAL MOTORS of CANADA
LIMITED**

10123742



One summer's afternoon in the late sixties young Robert McLaughlin, who had deserted farming for carriage-making, stopped work at the forge and lined up his men of brawn in front of his shop at Enniskillen, Ontario, to pose for the "likeness" which is reproduced above. In this shop he laid the foundations for the business which, as General Motors of Canada, is now headed by his son R. S. McLaughlin.



ODAY a giant factory chimney, looking out over miles of level grain fields, typifies the coming of industry to Western Canada. Spread out beneath the chimney are the acres of factories from which Regina-built automobiles will wend their way to every corner of the Prairie Provinces. This newest plant of General Motors of Canada is a far cry from the little shop in Enniskillen where in Confederation year Robert McLaughlin put together his first carriage. In bridging the gap the historian finds a story fraught with romance and inspiration, to thrill men's hearts and fire their ambition.

... an
Industry
is Born

The growth of the McLaughlin Carriage Company, which later became General Motors of Canada, was due to the pursuit of an ideal. This ideal, not perhaps formulated in words at first, but nevertheless the guiding principle behind young McLaughlin's effort, was "one quality only and that the best".

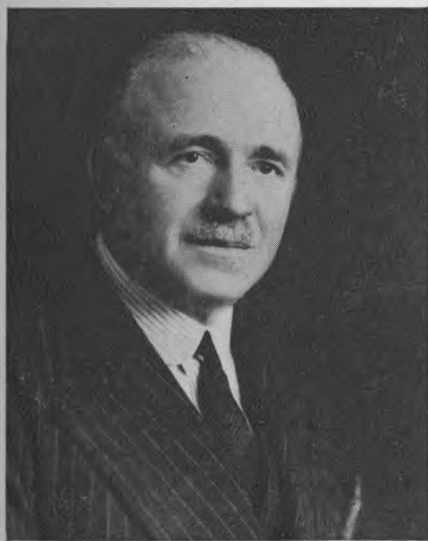
Little wonder, then, that he succeeded, with his unswerving adherence to this ambition. He built wagons and carriages, and he built them well. Always he strove for something a little better than anything previously turned out. So the business grew beyond local needs, and outgrew the tiny shop at Enniskillen. Courageous, Mr. McLaughlin launched out on a policy of expansion.

In 1879 he moved to Oshawa and laid the foundation of a business destined to outdistance in magnitude any other in its line in Canada. Due to Mr. McLaughlin's

energy and enterprise, and to the superior quality of his product, his vehicles found a steady sale. The business grew by leaps and bounds until it was found necessary to establish branch distributing houses in the larger cities throughout the Dominion. These branches grew rapidly with the increased demand for high-quality vehicles, until they were established in leading Canadian cities from coast to coast. They formed the nucleus for a splendid sales organization, supplemented by over 2,000 dealers and service stations.

Early in the history of the business at Oshawa, Mr. McLaughlin's two sons, after graduating from school, served their apprenticeship in the shop. Of these two, George W. McLaughlin has retired, and R. S. McLaughlin is now the active head of General Motors of Canada, Limited. It was R. S., better known as "Mr. Sam", who in 1907 foresaw the future of the motor vehicles, and persuaded his father and brother, after many misgivings, to take the step which proved so momentous in the career of the McLaughlin company. This was the formation of a connection with the Buick Motor Company by which the Canadians manufactured Buick-engined cars under the name of the McLaughlin Motor Car Company.

For some years after the inception of the motor car business, carriages, buggies and sleighs were continued. Then in 1915 the McLaughlins added the manufacture of the popular Chevrolet, and as the automobile business was expected to grow quickly, it was found expedient to dispose of the carriage end of the industry. It is estimated that up to this time the McLaughlin factories had distributed throughout the Dominion some 270,000 carriages and sleighs.



R. S. McLAUGHLIN

The principle of giving the best value for the money, which had made the carriage business so successful, proved equally sound in the automobile business. From its first introduction the McLaughlin-Buick became Canada's standard car, occupying a position of leadership in the field of fine automobiles which it still holds today. Chevrolet proved equally popular in a lower price-class.

An important milestone was passed in 1918 when the McLaughlin companies were united as a General Motors unit, under the name General Motors of Canada, Limited, with R. S. McLaughlin as president. From that time



progress has been sure and steady. Other lines of cars have been added until now, in one or more of its three plants, the company produces Chevrolet, Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Oakland, McLaughlin-Buick, LaSalle and Cadillac cars, and Chevrolet and General Motors trucks.

No story of General Motors of Canada would be complete without mention of the records of long and faithful service on the part of executives and factory workers who have been imbued with the ideals voiced and practised by Robert McLaughlin. More than eight hundred present employees have been with the company for ten years or more. Of the executives whose pictures appear in these pages, half have been with the McLaughlins for over twenty

True to
an Ideal





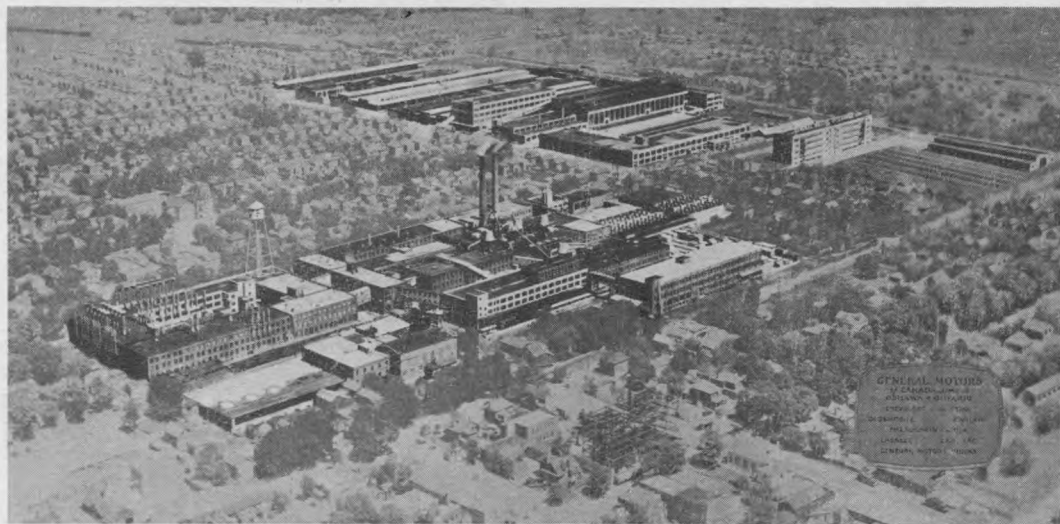
years. Thus has been built up an indefinable spirit of loyalty and co-operation absent in many concerns. Men and women have put their best years and their best efforts into General Motors products. Their craftsmanship is no mere advertising phrase. It is the work of hand and brain and heart trained by long experience, guided by honest endeavor, inspired by pride of accomplishment.


It has been said that business has no soul; but surely this history of General Motors of Canada is the story of a business with a soul. No group of men and women could be associated together as long as these have been, working always toward an ideal, without building up something more than a mere factory and sales organization. Co-operation is a living thing in a company where

a score of workmen can say of their executives, "I remember when Bill came in as an office boy," or "Jack and I worked together on that job."

Yet with all these records of past service it is important to remember that neither in the McLaughlin Company nor in General Motors of Canada has there been any stagnation. Long service and a distinguished history which only mean conservatism are disastrous. Rather in this case has experience produced progress. So it must always be if success is to be attained.



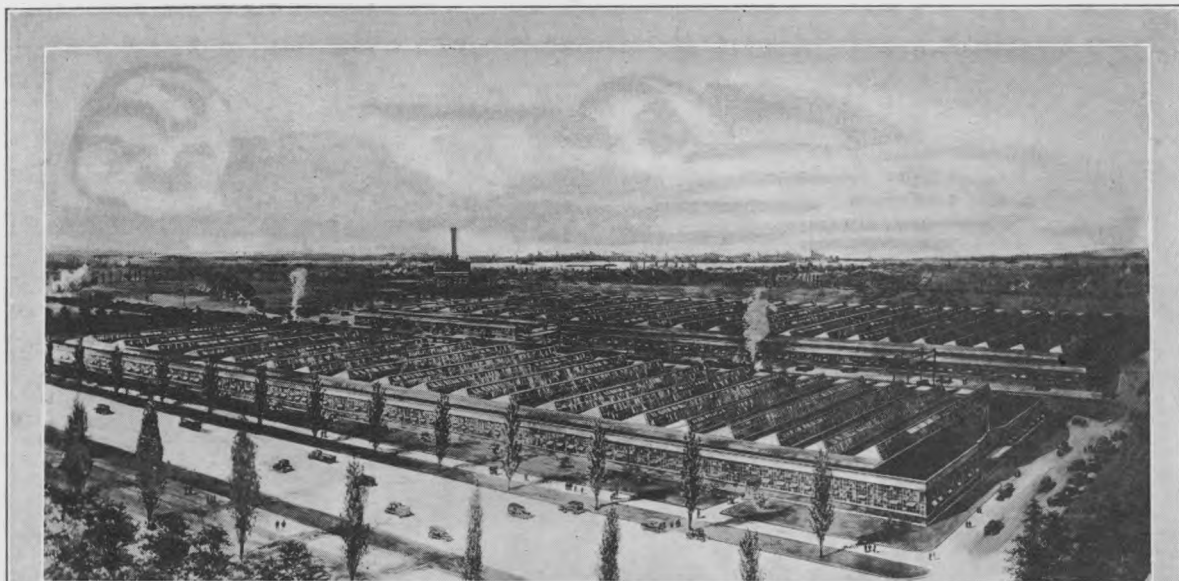


 GENERAL MOTORS OSHAWA PLANT

Thus we find that instead of the single motor car which was produced in 1908, General Motors of Canada "For Every Purse and Purpose" now manufacture "a car for every purse and purpose". Ranging in price from the Chevrolet roadster to the most luxurious custom-built Cadillac model, through a choice of more than a hundred different body styles, these Canadian-built cars meet every transportation need. The company's ambition, as recently expressed by the President, is to build in each class an automobile better than other automobiles and sell it for a lower price than that of any other in its price-class.

Because of its vast purchasing power, notable manufacturing economies, and adequate experimental facilities, General Motors is able to realize this ambition. In its many years of progress it has become a national institution. The Oshawa plant alone has grown from one small factory to a great plant of 59 different buildings, with a floor space of 2,200,000 square feet. This is only the centre of an organization which spreads into every





GENERAL MOTORS WALKERVILLE PLANT

city, town and village of any size in the Dominion. Exclusive of dealers, who comprise these outposts, the number of employees of General Motors of Canada in 1928 has reached 8,129, and the total yearly payroll runs to nearly ten million dollars. The company, however, contributes to the welfare of the country in many other ways than through its great wage bill. For example, the amount paid to the Dominion's railways for freight and express in and out of Oshawa amounts to approximately \$5,500,000 a year. In 1927—the latest year for which figures are yet available—General Motors of Canada purchased in the Dominion materials worth nearly \$27,000,000. The government received in excise and sales taxes and duties \$9,800,000. Where in 1927 the company had only one plant in operation, it will have three in 1929, in the widely separated communities of Oshawa, Regina and Walkerville. This last-named plant, recently opened, comprises thirteen buildings, with a floor space of approximately 385,000 square feet. Here have been concentrated the great truck-building operations of General Motors, and here are being manufactured the Chevrolet engines which will make General Motors of Canada more than ever a national institution. The rapid growth of this plant is evidenced by the fact that while two years ago it was inoperative, there will be 2,500 employees at work during the peak periods of 1929.

A National Institution

The tremendous output of General Motors of Canada, with consequent economies and low prices, would not be possible, however, if the activities of the company were confined to the Dominion. Fortunately the Canadian plants are able to export to foreign countries a large per-

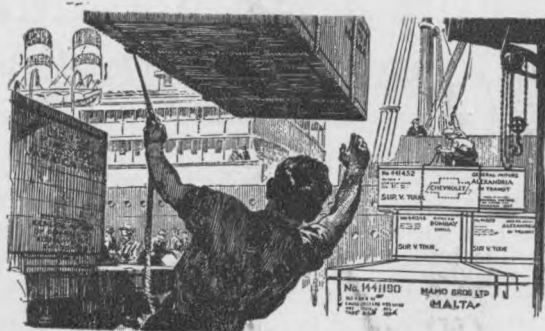
International in Its Scope



centage of their output, because General Motors of Canada is a part of General Motors Corporation, which has sales outlets all over the world. Thus Canadian-built cars advertise Canada in a hundred countries and their manufacture keeps Canadian workers busy in what would otherwise be off-seasons. The export business is only one of the many benefits reaped by Canadians because of the association of General Motors of Canada with the great international General Motors organization. Wherever the Canadian owner of a General Motors car may travel

throughout America or throughout the world, he will have the advantages of General Motors service. The car he drives was only made as good as it is through the work of the General Motors research laboratories and the General Motors international proving ground.

What applies to passenger cars applies equally as well to trucks: Just as General Motors of Canada provides a car for every possible need, so it serves the Dominion's industries by making the widest possible variety of trucks. From the half-ton de luxe panel delivery model to the great eight and ten ton "Big Brutes" there is a truck for every conceivable type of haulage. It is interesting to note that this company was the pioneer in speeding up motor haulage. When, a year and a half ago, the General Motors truck was equipped with the Buick engine, it established a new standard of speed, power and efficiency. No longer is it necessary for the motor truck to slow up traffic on the highways.





SIGNING THE CONTRACT FOR
THE NEW REGINA PLANT

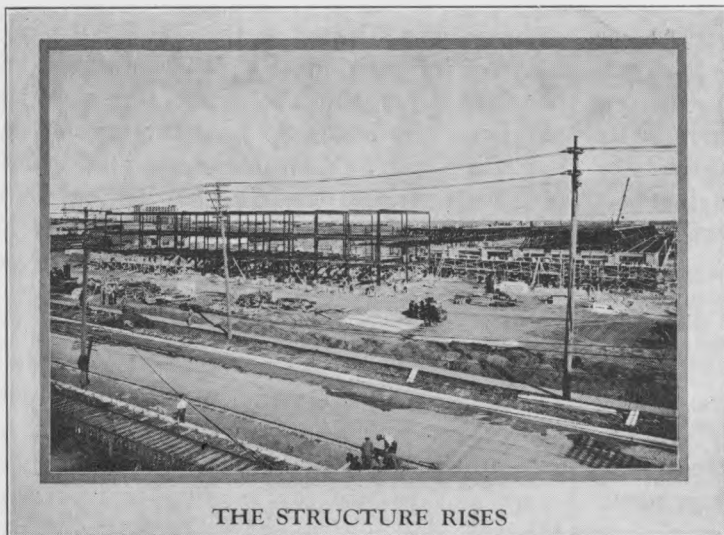
And now an Industry comes into the West

Since the first settlers straggled across the prairies, the very life of the country has depended upon the grain crop. On the solid foundation of its plentiful harvests the West has built up a vast empire. Through its rich grainfields run a network of roads and railways; prosperous towns are dotted here and there; the population grows apace.

Thus the way has been paved for industry, which requires quick and plentiful transportation, cheap power, adequate labor supply and a large prospective market.

Ever since the McLaughlin Motor Car Company, predecessor of General Motors of Canada, Limited, began doing business with the West 43 years ago, the firm has been closely associated with the prairie country and keenly alive to its ultimate possibilities. It has been a great source of gratification to the directors that the volume of business has grown to such an extent that the company is able to realize its ambition to establish a plant on the prairies.

Even yet, General Motors is pioneering in its enterprise. No other such great industrial undertaking has yet been established west of Winnipeg. But General Motors of Canada is confident that it will receive support from the West sufficient amply to prove the wisdom of its forward step.



Already its effects are being seen in the rapidly-growing number of industries which are establishing branches and factories on the prairie, many of them influenced by the presence of General Motors.



INTERIOR VIEW
DURING CONSTRUCTION

Although Regina was selected as the site for the new plant, on account of its position as a logical distribution centre yet the plant belongs to the prairies as a whole, not to Regina alone. Its influence goes far beyond the bounds of that community. With the associated industries that are growing up around it, the Regina plant will provide a market for the Saskatchewan farmer's goods and absorb some of his surplus labor in what are now off-season times.

As indicated above, establishment of the Regina factory is in pursuance of the General Motors policy of placing plants where volume of sales warrants, as near as possible to the centre of distribution for the particular territory. Under this system the benefits of increased employment, payroll distribution and local purchases are

shared by the territory which provides the volume of sales.

The reception accorded the new plant has filled the company's officials with optimism for the future. President R. S. McLaughlin said of today's development, "I feel that the new plant will prove not only the culmination of our long business relations with the West but the beginning of a new era of expansion here.

"The West has always supported us in splendid fashion. We feel doubly happy, therefore, that by establishing an important plant in Regina we can put back in payroll and purchase some of the business which western preference for our products has brought us.

"My optimism, and that of the other directors, in the future of the West is no mere phrase. It has resulted in the erection of this great plant, which anticipates an ever-increasing market throughout the West for Canadian-built automobiles."



SOME FACTS CONCERNING THIS NEWEST GENERAL MOTORS PLANT

Floor space in the Regina office and factory totals approximately 370,000 square feet. There are five separate buildings.

★ ★ ★

The factory's peak season comes at an entirely different season from the farmer's peak season. The two combined will tend to keep the demand for labor steady all year round.

★ ★ ★

A test track one-third of a mile long, made of concrete, enables all cars to be road-tested inside the company's property, thus preventing congestion on Regina streets and nearby roads.

★ ★ ★

The three 500 h.p. boilers with which the plant is equipped are capable of heating all parts of factory and offices to a steady temperature of 65 degrees Fahrenheit when the weather temperature is 40 degrees below zero.

★ ★ ★

The Regina plant does more than assemble cars. It includes also a body-building factory, and other operations.

★ ★ ★

It is expected there will be at least 850 plant employees during the peak of the season.

★ ★ ★

Approximately 320,000 square feet of mastic flooring has been laid over the cement floors in the factory to protect employees from the cold which they would otherwise feel, and to avoid unnecessary fatigue which would be caused by the hard floor.

★ ★ ★

Every clock in the Regina plant indicates exactly the same time. Each is electrically synchronized from a central control clock, so that employees check in and out at clocks which agree exactly with that in the pay office.

★ ★ ★

An innovation is the night watchman's equipment in the Regina plant. He does not carry a clock with which to plug in at intervals. Instead he merely plugs in at certain points with a key, which automatically registers on a keyboard in front of the night operator on duty at the fire chief's office.

★ ★ ★

The Auto Call system has been installed. This consists of a series of bells strategically situated around the plant, which call the executives to the nearest telephone if, while out in the factory, they are wanted in the office.

★ ★ ★

The most modern systems of lighting have been adopted, to protect employees' eyesight and preserve their efficiency.

O MEET THE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS of CANADA

A Canadian-built car is best able to meet the needs of Canadians. This fundamental fact has been the guiding principle of the company that is now General Motors of Canada, Limited, ever since it built, twenty years ago, the first Canadian automobiles.

Those were strange-looking vehicles, as cars go today, but for their time they were attractive in appearance and reliable in operation. Naturally, with the small sale in those early days it was possible only for a small proportion of the parts of the cars to be made in Canada. But from the very beginning McLaughlin-Buick bodies were designed and made in the McLaughlin factory at Oshawa. And it is interesting to observe, in the photographs of the first Canadian-designed and Canadian-built bodies the early appearance of the graceful curves from hood to cowl that are such a feature of the smartest cars today.

As during succeeding years the McLaughlin-Buick became Canada's standard car, only to be joined in the limelight of public favor by Chevrolet, Pontiac and the other General Motors lines, the proportion of Canadian "content" in each automobile became greater. Not only did the Oshawa factories make a much larger percentage of the car's composition, but other Canadian sources of material were developed until now more than one other Canadian company is largely dependent upon General Motors of Canada.

Then, when the first car came off the assembly line at the Regina plant, a new and tremendously important forward stride was made. For this first Regina-built automobile contained the first motor off the engine-building line at Walkerville, Ontario.

This historic automobile was one of the new six-cylinder Chevrolets. Executives of General Motors of Canada believe that it marked the realization of their ambition to make the Chevrolet more completely Canadian-built than any other car sold in the Dominion. From henceforth all other Chevrolet cars built at Oshawa, Regina and Walkerville will be powered by Canadian-built motors. As other General Motors cars attain larger and larger volume they, too, will be even more completely built in Canada than at present

Into the first Chevrolet off the Regina assembly line, as into other General Motors automobiles, went steel, iron, nickel and other metals from Canadian mines, hardwood from Canadian forests, wool from Canadian sheep. It was built by Canadian workmen from designs thoroughly checked by Canadian engineers to ensure their suitability to Canadian demands.

"It's better because it's Canadian" is, indeed, the creed of General Motors of Canada. This policy of building automobiles in the Dominion is pointed out with pride as the most adequate means of meeting the transportation needs of motorists from Halifax to Vancouver, both because the builders know these needs and because their craftsmanship is unsurpassed anywhere in the world. It is a source of gratification to the originators of the slogan, "It's better because it's Canadian" to know that this has been adopted by scores of other Canadian firms to persuade the citizens of the Dominion that it is a profitable policy to buy Canadian-made merchandise.



SERVING CANADIAN OWNERS OF GENERAL MOTORS CARS —

The Regina factory is not the first General Motors connection here. For years the company has maintained in the Saskatchewan capital a parts depot, one of a number spread throughout the Dominion at strategic locations. Thanks to these depots, practically every General Motors dealer and service station can obtain within twenty-four hours any parts which he does not have in stock. The number of such service stations, centering on the parts depots, may best be indicated by instancing the fact that if they were spread in a straight line across the Dominion there would be one every two miles.

Thus the owner of a General Motors car is assured of adequate service wherever he may go throughout Canada. And to maintain the quality of this service

General Motors of Canada has established free travelling schools and 'clinics' for dealers' mechanics so that they may be always fully conversant with advances in motor car design that necessitate new methods of maintenance.

IN QUEST OF BETTER CARS . . .



A SCENE AT THE
PROVING GROUNDS

The concrete test track at General Motors' Regina plant supplements in a small way the great international proving grounds of General Motors. Just as this Regina track removes the inconvenience of road-testing the cars on city streets, so the General Motors proving ground, first and largest of its kind, removed the uncertainty of trying out new ideas and new cars on public thoroughfares.

On a 1245-acre tract of land General Motors has built miles of brick, tarvia, gravel, concrete and dirt roads which reproduce every driving and weather condition. Test hill grades range from 7.26 per cent to 24 per cent—far greater than any on the average highway. Straight-aways as level as a billiard table and a 3½-mile high-speed loop, the largest in America, take the guesswork out of speed estimates.

At this international proving ground, tests are made and facts determined to a degree impossible when cars and trucks are tested on public highways. Here, under identical conditions of test, each new General Motors model must prove itself against the best that America and Europe can produce in the same price class.

It is interesting to know, for example, that the models now being built in Regina were subjected to 135 different tests at the Proving Ground before being adopted. These tests involved every phase of construction and performance; power, speed, endurance, acceleration, braking, steering, handling, riding comfort, fuel economy and so on. Every General Motors model has to pass these tests before being offered to the public. In three months at the proving ground a car or truck covers more miles than the average owner would drive it in three years.

Thus the proving ground is the motorist's assurance that when he buys a General Motors car or truck he is getting all possible quality and value at its price.





THE SYMBOL OF THE MASTER CRAFTSMAN

The Fisher Body emblem is the symbol of the master craftsman a symbol which identifies an accepted standard of beauty in automobile body design. The cars which bear it have been accorded a style-leadership in their class, as well as a reputation for strength, safety and endurance.

On every automobile built in Regina is the emblem shown above, which means that beneath the graceful contour of the outside is the steel and wood construction—the strongest known method of body construction. The Fisher Body of today is the result of many years of study and experiment, of rigid inspection at all stages, and of the use of only the finest materials obtainable.

Much of this material is Canadian in origin and workmanship. Selected Canadian hardwood is used; upholstery is made in Canada from Canadian yarns; plate glass used is cut and ground in Canada; Duco for finishing is made in Canada. Canadian Fisher Bodies are built by Canadians for Canadian conditions, and largely from Canadian materials.



GENERAL MOTORS of CANADA
LIMITED

CHEVROLET

PONTIAC

OLDSMOBILE

OAKLAND

McLAUGHLIN-BUICK

La SALLE

CADILLAC

All with body by Fisher

GENERAL MOTORS TRUCKS

Oshawa - Walkerville - Regina